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Steep roofs found on many Mississippi homes required contractor roofing specialists to adhere to stringent safety procedures as they worked feverishly. Their superior efforts staved off additional damage to homes and their contents, buying owners time to save belongings and make permanent repairs.

St. Louis District Blue Roof Team Covers the South.

FEB Awards a job well done.

by Nicole Dalrymple, PA

June 1 marked the start of the 2006 hurricane season and all eyes focused on New Orleans. But Hurricane Katrina also heavily battered the south half of Mississippi, though with far less media scrutiny than New Orleans received.

Mississippi's coastal region was devastated. Katrina's full brunt left absolute devastation south of I-10.

The Vicksburg District, which led the Corps' response and recovery efforts in Mississippi, recently received an email from a citizen who had benefited from one of the Corps programs – Operation Blue Roof.

Operation Blue Roof is a program administered by the Corps, in which contractors install temporary blue plastic roofs over storm-damaged ones. The program allows people to move back into their homes and out of the shelters, minimizing disruption to family life and preventing additional weather damage while homeowners await the installation of a new roof.

"I just wanted to thank all the people who installed 'blue roofs' on the Mississippi Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina," wrote Keith Stuart, an employee of the City of Biloxi. In a June 2, e-mail, Stuart said, "We just had our new roof installed. The Corps roof saved our house and belongings. Thank you."

The temporary roofing mission in Mississippi was executed by the St. Louis District's Temporary Roofing

Blue Roof Team Cont. page 3



Commander's Perspective



Lt. Col. Gregory C. Raimondo

Very soon COL Setliff will be firmly back in his fourth floor corner office and my tenure as your acting commander will come to an end. I have a few observations to share from my approximately nine months as acting St. Louis District Engineer.

First of all, it has been a privilege and honor to try to fill Colonel Setliff's shoes and to lead this organization in its daily District activities while he has been commanding Task Force Guardian in New Orleans.

It has been so, for one reason: the people.

Government organizations are frequently criticized for being ponderous and inflexible – for adhering to the way it's always been done. If someone is gone, their work doesn't get done.

Nothing could be more untrue in the case of the St. Louis District family. In

the front office when Colonel Setliff designated me to assume his responsibilities, Owen Dutt slid smoothly into the deputy's office and hasn't missed a beat. He's been at the same time a voice of constancy and an innovator of change to ensure we have stayed on the road ahead.

I have seen this same work ethic, talent and energy everywhere else throughout the 28,000 square miles of our District. The double-edged sword of key people retiring and others volunteering for hurricane recovery duty in the south, meant that no office has been untouched by personnel turbulence. The results have invariably been the same. New leaders have emerged and continue to step up. People have shuttled from job to job while keeping the mission constantly in mind.

We have and will continue to benefit greatly from both the volunteers who went south and those who moved up or over to carry on their work in their absence. It may not have sunk in yet, but both those who deployed and those who remained home have a vast number of new capabilities and experiences in their skills tool kits. Being recognized as a "go to" District with a deep pool of talent to be called upon, has also helped us manage the ongoing budget challenge.

It has been said that the past is the prolog to the future. Indeed, the adversities we have all overcome, overseas prosecuting the Global War on Terrorism, working downstream at the Gulf Coast disaster scene or here closer to home keeping the District running smoothly, are and will continue to make us stronger as individuals and an organization.

I am truly impressed by and grateful for your contributions and dedication. Thank you all for all you do for our District, Corps, Army and of course, our Nation.
Essayons!

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**Blue Roof Team Cont. from page 1**

Planning and Response Team with assistance from Nashville District's roofing team. The teams are two of five in the nation. The others are in Jacksonville, New York and Omaha Districts.

The St. Louis team deployed for an initial 30 days, working 7 days a week, and more than 12 hours a day, with many team members staying over two months. The team rotated back to St. Louis, but in late December many members were reactivated to go to Louisiana to assume Omaha's District's management of the ongoing roofing mission there.

During their deployment to Mississippi, the team activated roofing contractors, met with homeowners and managed installation of more than 57,000 blue plastic roofs. Living conditions were austere due to the extensive damage.

Appreciation and recognition has come to the team since the storm but accolades are not why they do this work.

"The team cares about people first," said Vick James, the team's resident engineer. "We're there to help them and that's what we stay focused on."

St. Louis FEB recognizes team

Noteworthy recognition came May 3, when the Greater St. Louis Federal Executive Board awarded its 2006 Excellence in Government Team Award to the District's Temporary Roofing Planning and Response Team. While the award specifically lists the 70 District team members, hundreds more came from Corps offices around the country, as well as from other federal agencies, including the Bureau of Reclamation and Indian Affairs.

"This recognition by the FEB is greatly deserved," said Lt. Col. Gregory Raimondo, acting District Commander. "The District's response to last year's hurricane season has been outstanding. I applaud the willingness of team members to leave their homes and families on short notice and work under challenging and stressful conditions to help others."

Preparation

A day prior to Hurricane Katrina's



Vick James (L) shows COL Lewis Setliff early entries into a growing stack of Rights of Entry forms - necessary before Corps and contractor employees could legally enter private premises.

landfall, a five-person team departed St. Louis. Driving to Mississippi with action officer Lou Dell'Orco, mission manager Greg Bertoglio, mission specialist Mike Rodgers, and logistics specialist Charlene Boecklen was mostly uneventful, recalls contract specialist Joan Brickey. "It wasn't until we were 25 miles outside of Vicksburg that we ran into all the traffic from the coast."

While four team members continued on to Vicksburg, action officer Lou Dell'Orco stopped in Jackson, where he would work in the Joint Field Office with federal, state and county officials.

As part of the National Response Plan, there are multiple emergency support functions, or ESFs. The Department of Defense, through the Army Corps of Engineers, is the lead agency for ESF 3: Public Works and Engineering Emergency Response. The Corps' missions include ice, water, temporary roofing and housing, and debris removal.

The hours preceding the storm were hectic and filled with coordination.

"Before Katrina hit, we looked for

estimates to drive funding," Dell'Orco explained. "The team looked at several factors: where is the hurricane expected to make landfall, where are population centers, where will recovery efforts begin?"

The team worked quickly to formulate a plan to get buy-in and support. The plan outlined how recovery efforts would proceed for the roofing mission, where work would start and even what the exit strategy would be.

"If a hurricane happens early in the season, we want to get the mission done as quickly as possible and get redeployed. The team may have to go out again," Dell'Orco explained. "Plus, the state needs to be ready to assume responsibility. The cost is too high to taxpayers for us to be there until the very end. There needs to be an exit strategy that everyone agrees with early on."

Landfall

Following landfall, and already on alert, the remaining roofing team members deployed. Within four days Jackie Arbeiter, database manager;



Steele Beller, real estate; Vick James, resident engineer; Chris Rosenkranz, administrative specialist, and Karen Watwood, quality assurance supervisor, arrived in Vicksburg.

They jumped in and immediately started assisting. There was only a small window of opportunity to get prepared.

"The emergency response functions move out first," Dell'Orco explained. "Things such as ice and water that are critical for life support. Temporary roofing is considered a recovery effort and follows behind."

To prepare, the team identified the storage facilities for FEMA's temporary roofing materials, created quality assurance packets, initiated contact with local emergency centers, determined where walk-in stations could be established for citizen contacts and reviewed reports of where damage had occurred.

On September 8, the team departed for Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Miss., where the Vicksburg District was establishing the Recovery Field Office. From there Vick James, Karen Watwood and Steele Beller moved into Gulfport to open the resident office and start collecting rights of entry – legal authority for the Corps to enter private residences for roofing repairs.

While Vicksburg had sustained storm damage, it was nothing like the damage and conditions that would meet District employees further south. Gas and food were hard to obtain; showers were a luxury; vehicles had to serve as transportation and lodging, and negotiating an already unfamiliar area was further complicated by the absence of electricity and street signs.

Vick James, who deployed to New York City following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, said Katrina's devastation was shocking. "I went to New York City following 9-11 and thought that was bad. This was horrible," he said. Chris Rosenkranz, who got an opportunity to view the devastation by helicopter about a month into recovery efforts, felt the same way, saying the area looked like a "war zone."

The initial weeks were hard. Not only



Long shadows indicate the start of another lengthy day for the St. Louis District Blue Roof Team in Mississippi. Here Kelly and Greg Bertoglio (L), COL Lewis Setliff, visiting from Task Force Guardian in New Orleans, and Mike Rodgers, depart Keesler AFB, Miss., to inspect progress on Blue Roof work.

was there stress and personal discomfort, the office was understaffed. James recalls having about eight people the first few days. "We collected 14 rights of entry the first day and then we did 700 the next day. We were spread really thin. People worked very hard," he said.

Fortunately, despite their own personal loss, many Gulfport residents volunteered to help in the collection centers. "We had a lot of volunteers," James said. "They helped make it a success." Assistance also came from the U.S. Air Force and Navy.

"The local people made a huge difference," James said. "They helped us help them."

Additionally, volunteer groups from around the country started to arrive and provide welcome assistance to people in more rural areas. The contractors, responsible for installing the temporary roofs, were able to move quicker in more densely populated areas.

Telephone Calls

The walk-in stations were packed and the phones rang constantly.

"Once our phone numbers were made public it was crazy," James recalls. A lot of elderly people couldn't travel, so the resident office started to accept rights of entry over the phone.

Once contractors from around the country got Joan Brickey's phone

number at Keesler she was hopping too. Calls from companies interested in obtaining work flooded the office.

There were also reporting requirements. Everyone wanted to know statistics: numbers of rights of entries collected daily, roofs installed and the estimated completion date.

Greg Bertoglio needed numbers from the resident office and Lou Dell'Orco needed numbers from the field office. It was a multi-tiered reporting requirement that fed daily meetings and provided information ultimately feeding into reports reaching the highest echelons of the Pentagon and White House.

Adding an additional reporting requirement was the presence of auditors who were requesting and reviewing information as the recovery efforts were taking place. Representatives from Internal Review Office, the Defense Contract Audit Agency and the Criminal Investigation Division were on-hand throughout the response.

Quality Assurance

Eventually more than 400 people worked on the roofing mission in Mississippi and getting to that number was no small feat. There was a massive requirement for quality assurance (QA) representatives. QAs monitor work to ensure that it is done correctly and to start the accountability chain for



properly paying contractors.

In fact, the fight for QAs was fierce. Other missions such as debris removal and Louisiana's recovery efforts vied for the same people.

As numbers of QAs grew to 200, new collection stations opened and the team was spread more thinly. James recalls daily coordination talks with Bertoglio ending with his request for more QAs.

Many of the QAs in Mississippi were new to the roofing mission. James estimates 98 percent of the people were new to QA work and had no prior experience with temporary roofing.

Before reaching the resident office, the QAs processed through the field office at Keesler AFB. Greeting them was Chris Rosenkranz, whose first day with the roofing team was her first day on the ground, September 2.

"I greeted probably 99 percent of all the QAs coming in," she said. "I met them, helped get their paper work filled out and got them where they needed to go. I gave my phone number to everyone. They knew they could call me if they needed anything.

"I did everything I could to make their lives easier so that they could do their jobs," she explained.

Field Adjustments

While Florida had given the team good experience in 2004, they had to quickly adjust to unique aspects of Mississippi.

James explained some differences. "Homes are different in Mississippi," he said. "There are a lot of tin roofs, steeper roofs and older roofs. In Florida there were a lot more mobile homes."

"Storms are different and so are states," Bertoglio said, "We came out of Florida with a good foundation and hit the ground running in Mississippi. I am very proud of the team's effort, and accomplishments."

Giving the team a 'turn-key' perspective, many initial responders were backfilled by fellow St. Louis employees. Vick James was instrumental in establishing the resident office and fellow Construction Branch colleague Dennis Woodruff closed out the office.

Joan Brickey was backfilled by Kathy Souders for six weeks. Then she went back to close out the mission. Chris Rosenkranz deployed for 71 days, came home for a short break and returned for 11 days to help close out in Mississippi.

"We got to see the mission from start to finish," Brickey said. Dell'Orco added "We had a turn-key operation. We started and finished the roofing mission at all levels of responsibility. We have a lot of experience to draw from if someone needs us next season."



In some Mississippi neighborhoods, virtually every home required a temporary blue roof to safeguard belongings and structures.

Lessons Learned

The team has had a couple months to reflect on lessons from last year and is taking steps to be even more prepared for this year's hurricane season. They have enjoyed their successes.

"This was a great team effort. Things went really well in Mississippi and there were phenomenal results in the field," Dell'Orco said. "The state was happy with the project as was I, but we've been busy taking steps to implement our lessons learned. If we are called again, we will be even better prepared."

Changes the team made include expanding pre- and post-storm deployment teams to include a few more people. A team roster has been prepared to support a 60-day deployment as opposed to the earlier 30-day.

Team members are also updating

training regulations and standard operating procedures, and a pocket-size QA reference is being created.

For example, to get ready for this and future hurricane seasons, Greg Bertoglio has a box pre-packed under his desk, with signs, operating procedures, a copy of the temporary roofing contract, Corps flags, software, and office supplies. "It's just enough to get the team established in the early days of the emergency response," he explained.

A bag holding his Corps shirts, hard

hat and other items is at home, ready to be grabbed at a moment's notice.

"Katrina made me better for the roofing team," Bertoglio said in reflection. "It presented a lot of challenges, giving me a greater appreciation for those I worked with and helping me to understand the requirements of upper management more."

Veterans of Florida 2004 and Mississippi 2005, the St. Louis District's Temporary Roofing Planning and Response Team is temporary in name only. They are permanently ready.

But team member Joan Brickey probably echoed the sentiments of many Gulf Coast residents. "I hope it's a calm season," she said. "I think the Gulf Coast has had it pretty rough the last couple years. But we'll be there if they need us. We are ready to go."



The Hurricane Katrina Story in Three District Employees' Own Words.

I joined the "Blue Roof" team in the last part of September. I know the first thing about the experience I will never forget was encountering the dreaded "Love Bugs."

Before we arrived in Vicksburg the front of my rental car had a



Richard Hagan

carpet layer of these strange insects adjoined at the time of impact. After initial processing in Vicksburg it was on to Keesler AFB where I first saw some devastation that will stick in my mind forever. Seeing a front end loader removing the type of debris off of an interstate that one would never expect to see on an interstate still is quite humbling to think about.

After reporting to Keesler, I was sent to the Hattiesburg, Miss., field office and from there was assigned to a team based out of Columbia. Even at the end of September the temporary roofing teams were spreading into new places of needed assistance. The field training period lasted one afternoon. We pretty much had to hit the ground running with the basics. It was hard to believe at first that I was responsible for doing estimates for a whole county by myself and believe me I hit every road at some point in that county before I moved on.

In a Nutshell....

I never had the opportunity to serve for disaster recovery of this type in all my 32 years with the government. The "Blue Roof" program was new, challenging, and very rewarding. I started out doing something that was totally new to me and ended up serving as a team leader for four counties. I felt the worth of my efforts when I found myself representing the "Blue Roof" program

and reporting our progress in weekly meetings to the mayor and city officials in Brookhaven, Miss. In the area that I worked, I only encountered people that were totally thankful for our efforts.

They all wanted to tell you their stories and it was so hard to tell them you had to go because others needed help also. I served for 60 days then returned home to see my son home on R&R from Iraq.

*Richard "Bucket" Hagan
Lock and Dam 24 at Clarksville, MO.*

I worked as a QA in the Gulfport area with Blue Roof beginning Sept. 3. Just a few days after the storm. My first task was to take down information from people signing up for blue roofs.

Within one hour of sitting face to face with the hurricane victims, I had to get up and leave the room. Their stories of survival, of what they had lost and what they still had were just too much. I would excuse myself for a minute and try to come back dry-eyed. It was not easy.

I spent four months in Iraq as a QA but this experience affected me deeper than dealing with mortars and gunfire. The people of Mississippi were the most kind, generous people I have ever met. You cannot imagine how grateful they were and when you think about it, all we were doing was providing them with blue plastic!

Of course there were a few "cranky" ones, but for the most part they were wonderful. They could not thank us enough. I never once heard anyone complaining about the lack of help they were getting. Actually the only complaint I heard (and I heard it often) was about the long lines to sign up for Red Cross benefits or the fact that their insurance companies had not contacted them yet. Later, when I was sent out to inspect the roofs, I was amazed how every single homeowner invited me into their home - regardless of resources -

they all invited me in for iced tea or a soft drink. Sometimes they just wanted someone to talk to - this was still early into the recovery and I know many of them were still in shock and needed someone to listen....

*Leanne Cruitt
Lake Shelbyville, Shelbyville, Ill.*

My name is Gene Morgan of the Rend Lake Office ... I was with the Blue Roof Group in New Orleans during the month of January ...

one of my most interesting interactions with victims was one day in a very nice subdivision ... the family was gutting their house ... I went over and introduced myself to them and asked how they were doing ... the lady, approximately 50 years of age said they had just returned from Arizona to start working on their house ... their kids were still in Ariz., ... she told me the story of the Sat. night before Katrina hit ... she is a RN at one of the local hospitals ... she said she sat on the edge of her bed that Sat. night and just prayed for God to tell her what to do about her patients ... her husband was telling her that they are leaving and leaving soon ... so within a few minutes they were evacuating ... she said it killed her to leave the hospital

... now it is January and they are back in their beautiful subdivision ... the streets bordered by fantastic live oaks ... at that moment she said to me ... Honey ... look across the street ... in that house lives a doctor ... next to him is a lawyer ... next to him are two school teachers ... we have been neighbors for years ... and today, I don't have any idea where they are ... at that moment, she began to cry freely ... I said to her ... Mrs. Johnson, I believe you need a hug ... so on Corps time, I gave this beautiful lady a Corps of Engineers hug ... I will never forget that story told me among the beautiful live oaks of New Orleans ...

*Gene Morgan
Rend Lake, Benton, Ill.*



Gene Morgan



Leanne Cruitt



MVS Temporary Roofing, Planning and Response Team

Jackie Arbeiter	Jim Ford	Tom Murrell
Glen Ashoff	Randy Fraser	Carl Okenfuss
Cheryl Atkins	Cynthia Gan	Riley Pope
Steele Beller	Natta Gill	Pam Reed
Barb Belpedio	Rich Hagan	Ed Riiff
Greg Bertoglio	Kent Hayes	Mike Rodgers
Charlene Boecklen	John Helfrich	Chris Rosenkranz
John Boeckmann	Sue Horneman	Jon Schulte
Eddie Brauer	Shelly Huels	Dennis Seibel
Joan Brickey	Stephen Jackson	Maria Shafer
Don Brown	Vick James	Pat Shaw
Jasen Brown	Jim Kuehnle	Roger Siller
John Cannon	Ann Lachler	Robert Slack
Nick Carroz	Brett Leavitt	Kevin Slattey
Oliver Craig	Joanne Long	Erich Soraghan
Chuck Crocker	Katy Manar	Kathy Souders
Leanne Cruitt	Craig Marshall	Rick Stubits
Deb Davis	Tracy Mathis	Nancy Tokraks
Lou Dell'Orco	Allen Mehrer	Harry Ward
Allen Diaz	Tim Middleton	Karen Watwood
Steve Dierker	Matt Miller	Larry Wernle
Pam Doty	Robert Morgan	Robert Wich
Don Duncan	Ida Morris	Dennis Woodruff
		Donna Zoeller.

Five Hurricane Names Retired

Katrina and Rita are among five hurricane names that will never again reappear to refer to future storms, according to the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration.

Normally the approved list of storm names from the international hurricane committee of the World Meteorological Organization runs in a six year cycle. But this announcement means that there is no chance Katrina and Rita will find their ways into the headlines as future storms.

Other hurricane names that are being retired include Dennis, Stan and Wilma.

For 2011, they will be replaced by Don, Katia, Rina, Sean and Whitney, respectively.

Names of especially violent or destructive storms are retired for reasons of sensitivity and to provide distinctions within scientific, historic and legal communities.

To see the list of names for tropical cyclones through 2010, and to learn how storms are named, go to:

www.nhc.noaa.gov/aboutnames.shtml

For more information about retired names, see: www.nhc.noaa.gov/retirednames.shtml

Safety Note: Spring Flowers and Brown Recluses

The two aren't really connected. They just arrive about the same time.

Found throughout Missouri and the southern two-thirds of Illinois, the small (3/8 inch-long) spider is commonly found around human habitation such as buildings, basements and other shelters, where they hide in boxes, in stacks of wood or rock or just about anywhere out of the way. That's why they are called "recluses." They hide. But you can provoke them to bite if you inadvertently disturb them.

The bites are very seldom fatal, but they are most dangerous for children, older people or weakened individuals.

The Brown Recluse is usually uniformly brown with a violin-shaped darker marking on the backs of adults.

Some are unaffected by their bites. The initial bite may be like a pinprick

and require 2-8 hours to "take hold." Generalized itching, fever, chills, nausea, even vomiting or shock may follow. During healing there may be a lesion up to the size of a hand, with dead or necrotic flesh that gradually sloughs away before healing in 6-8 weeks.

If you notice being bitten and can capture the spider – even dead – this will aid medical personnel in treating you. Several bite symptoms mimic other illnesses or problems.



The Brown Recluse is about the size of a quarter, but it packs at least a ten dollar bite.

Precautions

- Shake out clothing before dressing where spiders may be.
- Wear gloves when moving wood, rocks or rubbish (check the gloves first!)
- Use care when handling boxes in basements or garages. Brown Recluses often get under box flaps to hide. Continue to be careful with boxes and containers after moving them. You may move infested boxes from one area to a clean area – and infest that area as well.
- Check and replace screens as necessary.
- Seal cracks where spiders may enter; tape boxes shut securely.
- Clean up. Remove trash.
- Brown Recluses are scavengers; remove dead insects they may feed upon.
- If you see them, swat them with a rolled paper or fly swatter.
- Several insecticides are effective in killing or diverting Brown Recluses. Read labels and ask experts for advice.
- Hit the internet for pictures and additional advice.



Meet Thaddeus

Thaddeus Willoughby has been a contracting officer and contracting team leader with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District for about 10 months now. But he's no stranger to the military or contracting.

Willoughby came to us from the 375th Air Wing Contracting Office at Scott Air Force Base, in the Metro East. He hails from New Orleans and came to Scott AFB at the end of a 20 year (20 years, 11 days, according to the meticulous contracting officer) career in the U.S. Air Force. In the Air Force, Thaddeus served first as an electrician before changing occupational specialties to work in contracting for the service.

Speaking of his New Orleans heritage, Willoughby noted that his family's Katrina experiences ranged from no damage for some of his relatives to a sister and nephew losing their houses. "Two of my brothers who were there have decided to move – but move or stay – the best news is that they all made it through alive," he noted with obvious relief.

With 10 years experience under his belt working with military contracting, Thaddeus made a smooth transition to the civil service side of the house at Scott after his retirement.

Why did he move across the river to work for the Corps?

"I wanted to broaden my contracting horizon and see how another organization carries out this mission," Willoughby replied. "Everyone does the same basic functions a little bit differently," he said.

Asked about the differences between his work for the Air Force and the Corps of Engineers, Thaddeus replied, "The pace here is much faster. We also deal with a much larger area – 28,000 square



The St. Louis District Contracting Office is organized into two teams working with more senior contracting officers. Here, team member Barrietta Killiebrew and team leader Thaddeus Willoughby go over details of a contract announcement before it is released to the winner of the competitive bid.

miles versus a relatively small military base and a lot of what we do is highly visible in the region and communities."

He also said that he sees results much more quickly in his new job. "I've been involved with contracting for the Chain of Rocks Canal sand berm project, for the new lift gate machinery at Locks 27 and for refurbishing the tainter gates at Lock 24. There's sand in place, machinery replacement at 27's done and the tainter gates up north are nearing completion," he said with a smile.

Thaddeus keeps a low profile when it comes to his job. He resides in Glen Carbon, Ill., with his wife Naomi and says that most people don't even know what he does for a living. "I'm proud of what I do, but my contracting duties often take place here in the region and even in my own community. I don't want people to wonder if they can influence me on a contract decision. They will be disappointed if they think they can, but I'd just as soon not have to deal with that.

"I really had little idea of the mission

and the depth of involvement of the Corps of Engineers in the local community and region before I came here," he concluded.

For leisure, Thaddeus says he plays a little basketball. "It was one-on-one when the boys were growing up or just shooting some buckets – no teams or leagues." Smiling as he spoke about his five sons, he reported that one lives in Texas and another is in Florida, while the other three have remained in the area. "We've got three grand children," he added with obvious pleasure.

If he wasn't working for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, "If I won the lottery," he'd like to try his hand at fish farming.

But returning from that fantasy to what really occupies a large portion of his off-duty time, Thaddeus said he is the chairman of the trustees for the Church of the Living God in Fairview Heights. "We're getting ready to build a new church. I hope my skills and knowledge will make that a better process for our congregation," he concluded.



New Labor Relations Officer

by Nicole Dalrymple, PA

Jennifer Landsaw's life and career with the Army began almost simultaneously in 2003. A new Army wife, the St. Louis District's new Labor Relations Officer arrived at Fort Riley, Kan., at that time.

While her husband prepared for a deployment to Iraq, Landsaw applied for and was accepted into the Civilian Human Resources Agency intern program. CHRA's three year training program gave her experience in all facets of human resources, and a welcome diversion from her husband's absence.

The Civilian Personnel Operations Center (CPOC) at Fort Riley provided training opportunities in staffing, classification and employee training and development. But Landsaw had to travel to a Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) to gain experience in management/employee relations and labor relations.

This six-month rotation brought her to the St. Louis District in July 2004 where she trained under Kathy Hatfield, a longstanding Corps employee with close to 40 years experience in human resources and labor relations.

Reflecting on her first time in St. Louis, Landsaw said she found a fit with management-employee relations.

"Kathy made the work a lot of fun," she recalled. "The work at the CPOC is more processing and less face-to-face. I like the advisory role that comes with management-employee relations."

The work in the St. Louis District proved not only a good fit but a perfect match.

Almost a year after completing her rotation here, Landsaw was selected to replace Hatfield who retired in January with 38 years of federal service.

"Jennifer trained with us during her Army internship in 2004, and we found her to be very energetic, enthusiastic, bright, thorough and dedicated," Kathy Tober, chief of Human Resources, said.



The St. Louis District's new Labor Relations Officer, Jennifer Landsaw has been with the Department of the Army for three years and the District for three months. After training under 40-year veteran Kathy Hatfield, Landsaw took the reins in her new job in January.

"Her interpersonal skills were a particular strength, and that is exactly what is needed in this position. From the moment she arrived, it felt like she had been a part of our HR family forever and I was thrilled to get the opportunity to hire her permanently."

Since January 8, Landsaw has worked to make the transition smooth.

"Everyone knew Kathy and they were use to her," she said. "My goal is to make the transition as seamless as possible. I hope to continue Kathy's legacy and provide the same high level of service to our managers and employees."

When asked about some of the things she learned from Hatfield, Landsaw listed the importance of partnering with union representatives and the national offices, fostering positive labor relations, being visible to all managers in the District Headquarters and off site, and promoting good management practices.

In an effort to become visible and accessible, Landsaw plans to visit all the District's projects that have labor contract employees in her first year. She has already visited Mark Twain and

Rend lakes, Rivers Project, Dredge Potter, Mel Price Locks and Dam, and Lock and Dam 24.

"The site visits have been great so far. They give me an opportunity to meet the managers and employees, learn about their jobs and let them know I'm here to support them," she said.

Having never been exposed to the military before marrying a Soldier, Landsaw learned quickly that the military is a "tight knit community." The same thing has been said of the Army Corps of Engineers so Landsaw is feeling right at home.





Stemler Award Debuts

by Nicole Dalrymple, PA

Most people have heard of the Oscar, the Pulitzer and the Nobel Peace Prize. Now a new award named after one of St. Louis District's very own.

The 'Stemler Award' made its debut at the annual Inland Waterway Conference in Memphis, Tenn., March 14. At the awards ceremony Maj. Gen. Don T. Riley jokingly told Joan Stemler, the award's namesake, that most people have to die in order to have an award named after them.

As District water control manager, Stemler has monitored and managed a challenging 4-year cycle of low water events, during which dozens of new record lows were set.

The River Industry Action Committee (RIAC), a coalition of tow companies and navigation interests, wanted to honor her not only by giving her an award, but by naming it after her.

"Joan does a tremendous job," said Sammy Dickey, RIAC chairman. "She is very dedicated and meticulous and has gone above and beyond to learn about the importance of dependable forecasts to navigation."

"During periods of low water, fluctuations in the river stage can be devastating to navigation," Dickey continued. "When the river is high, a foot or two fluctuation does not impact industry, but once the river is at zero feet on the St. Louis gage, even the slight shifts can have million dollar implications."

Industry has come to rely on and trust Stemler's river forecasts.

"Joan has a record of forecasting unprecedented, accurate river stages," Dickey said. "Her work, and that of her section, allows the towing industry to load barges consistently, without fear of having overloaded barges in the system."

Low water conditions often require

industry to lighten loads but industry also wants to load as heavily as possible.

Slightest change in water levels can mean thousands of dollars in lost cargo.

According to Lynn Muench, with American Waterways Operators, industry loses approximately 17 tons of commodities per inch, per barge, when they start lightening their loads.

"We appreciate Joan's efforts into understanding the industry and the tireless work she puts into getting gage readings and ensuring forecasts are as accurate as possible," Dickey continued. "She exemplifies what going the extra mile means and represents the best in civil service."

During low water periods that kind of service can mean getting up every two hours all night to monitor gage readings and working weekends and holidays. A long string of sleepless nights and high stress decisions preceded the honor of the Stemler Award.

Low water is the quiet event, Stemler explained, contrasting it to the zoo-like media atmosphere that surrounds floods. "Droughts are much more work [for water control] but get little attention."

Stemler, who admits she was initially dumbfounded during the award presentation, is truly touched by the sentiment and intent behind the award.

"The award was a real surprise," she said. "When Sammy was reading the citation, I thought he was joking. Over the last six years, the District has built a relationship of trust with the navigation industry. Folks like Sammy and Raymond [Hopkins, former RIAC head] have become friends, and they have come to trust and depend on us. This recognition means a great deal to me."

Fortunately for her, the awarding of the Stemler Award almost coincided with the end of low water, March 12. Since then she's been able to unwind, saying with visible relief that it's nice to take cold medicine and not worry about whether it's drowse free.

With this season of low water over it's hard to tell what next year will be like but it is clear that the established cooperative partnership between industry, the U.S.

Coast Guard and the Corps will ensure future responses will be weathered well.

RIAC will bestow the Stemler Award on an annual basis at the Inland Waterway Conference to a Corps employee who has made a significant contribution to navigation over a career or within a single year. A separate award, the Ice Breaker, has been created to recognize superb U.S. Coast Guard employees.



Joan Stemler and the award named after her.

June is National Safety Month: Home injuries not uncommon

"Home safe and sound:" a comforting expression, but not always true.

The National Safety Council says eight million Americans suffer disabling injuries at home. 33,200 more die there each year. The Council lists safety items every home should have.

- Smoke detector. Most home deaths happen between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.
- Carbon monoxide detector: Have at least one located near the bedrooms.
- Ground fault circuit interrupter. GFCIs protect against electrocution when around water; bathrooms, laundry rooms, kitchens, swimming pools and outdoor receptacles.
- Fire extinguisher. A class ABC is best. Mount it near an exit so anyone using it can escape from the house.
- Emergency phone numbers: fire, police, doctors, and poison-prevention centers.
- Tagged shutoffs: on shutoff valves for gas, oil, water, and electricity. Everyone should know how to shut off utilities.
- Adequate lighting. Falls lead to about 15,000 deaths each year.
- Handrails. Every set of stairs, inside and outside, should have them on both sides.
- Only UL approved appliances.



Coast Guard Sets New Command in St. Louis

U.S. Coast Guard Sector Upper Mississippi River was established Thursday afternoon, April 27, in a traditional “sea services” commissioning ceremony. At the order of the new Sector Commander, Capt. Suzanne E. Englebert, two ranks of blue-uniformed Coast Guard personnel swiftly “manned the rail” of the overlook stage on the St. Louis waterfront at the foot of the Arch.

The new command brings together assets and personnel from two organizations that were decommissioned at the same time: USCG Group, Upper Mississippi River and Marine Safety Office, St. Louis. Together, they form a single structure that provides safety, security and readiness for the largest such Coast Guard Command in the lower 48 states.



Rear Adm. Robert F. Duncan, Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District, New Orleans, presided over the command's establishment.

The command encompasses all of Wyoming, Colorado, North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas and Iowa, as well as parts of Missouri, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Illinois. Within that region are 33 locks and dams, 238 bridges and seven major population centers.

Rear Adm. Robert F. Duncan, Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District,



Festive, colorful, traditional ceremonies on the St. Louis shoreline of the Mississippi River marked establishment of the U.S. Coast Guard Sector Upper Mississippi River, April 27, 2006.

from New Orleans, presided over the ceremony. He began by first thanking St. Louisans – including invited guests and others who happened to be enjoying the beautiful weather at the Arch grounds – for their hospitality in hosting parts of his command when many of his people were driven from New Orleans by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita last year.

He then discussed the accomplishments of the two commands being disestablished and their commanders, before ordering the new organization to be stood up.

Lieut. Cmdr. Frank J. Kulhawick, commander of Group Upper Mississippi River applauded his personnel and then focused on his family's sacrifices that had enabled him to serve for two decades. Kulhawick assumed the position of the new command's Deputy Sector Commander – second in command – upon the ceremony's completion.

Capt. Englebert, a veteran of 22 years of service and a graduate of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, similarly thanked the personnel of the Marine Safety Office for their superb service and then outlined the new mission the two organizations were taking on in their merger.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers enjoys a close relationship with the Coast Guard, which conducts law enforcement, vessel inspections and licences mariners. The two organizations work together on a daily basis to ensure safe, efficient and secure use of the waters throughout their shared regions.

The new multi-state organization will inspect more than 1,700 vessels and 200 facilities each year in carrying out its responsibilities under the Department of Homeland Security. Its 210 reserve and active duty personnel will also maintain



Capt. Suzanne E. Englebert, assumed command of the 11-state Upper Mississippi River Sector, the largest command in the lower 48 states.

more than 6,600 aids to navigation. The Sector also maintains a 24-hour communications watch that will provide assistance to more than 175 mariners in distress annually.

The new command prides itself in its ability and readiness to serve and includes in its vision, “A ‘Coastie’ within Reach.”



Wings of Spring Confluence Birding Festival

The Wings of Spring Confluence Birding Festival saw more than 1,600 visitors come to the Rivers Migratory Bird Sanctuary in West Alton, Mo., Friday and Saturday, April 28 and 29.

More than 130 students from area schools came on Friday with their teachers and learned about the critical role the Confluence Region plays in support of the migratory bird populations throughout the Midwest.

On Saturday over 1,500 people braved rain and high winds to share a similar experience. Visitors were thrilled to have the opportunity to visit one of America's most noted bird watching areas and to learn from numerous exhibitors and program presenters.

Two popular activities were provided for children of all ages. Children were able to make their own bird using a variety of craft items. Another favorite was a chance to build blue bird houses that could be taken home by the children. The staff used pre-cut and drilled materials for the houses. The materials were donated by a local building supply firm.

Several presenters gave talks throughout the day in the speakers' tent. Brian "Fox" Ellis from Peoria, Ill., gave an excellent reenactment of the life of John James Audubon. Always a crowd favorite, the World Bird Sanctuary from Valley Park, Mo., brought several birds from their rehab program to delight visitors. Also giving presentations were Creve Coeur Camera on Nature Photography Basics and Ken Schall gave a presentation on Gardening for Wildlife. Several vendors selling delicious sandwiches added to the day at the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary.

Shuttle busses provided transportation to off site parking areas as well as the Jones Confluence Point State Park. The shuttle provided a secondary service by allowing visitors to experience the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary, where numerous birds and plant species –



Wild Bird Sanctuary, Valley Park, Mo., naturalist Katrina Whitner presents Fred, a hood vulture from Africa, to Wings of Spring Festival attendees. Whitner was telling listeners about the bird and its role in the African ecosystem when it spread its six-foot wings to impress viewers with its size and power.

many endangered or threatened – abound.

The Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary is in the middle of a 200-square mile regional park and trail system that blends urban and rural environments in a public-private collaboration, known as the Confluence Greenway.

The Confluence lies at the heart of the Mississippi Flyway, a nationally renowned, important migratory path for

birds during their seasonal north-south flights.

It hosts a sequence of species each spring and fall as they fly north for the summer and then back south to escape winter weather and food shortages. The area provides rest and food for both water fowl and species that inhabit prairies and woods. In addition to those which only pass through, other species spend the



Benjamin Hopkins (6 ½) of Mascoutah, Ill., discovers the great horned owl is not so formidable without its bulky feathers and sharp beak. Benjamin was one of many young people who learned many fun-filled facts about the birds that frequent the region during his visit to the Wings of Spring Confluence Birding Festival at the Rivers Migratory Bird Sanctuary in West Alton, Mo.



Brian "Fox" Ellis from Peoria, Ill., reenacted the life and times of John James Audubon for visitors in a tent classroom at the festival. His interactive descriptions of the wildlife that Audubon observed in the early years of the United States brought to life the wildlife that people observed as the country's population spread westward.

summer, or even most of the year there. More than 326 species have been observed in the bird sanctuary enabling bi-state residents to observe numerous birds year round. In fact, bird species seldom, if ever seen in North America, such as the Ross's Gull, which calls Siberia home, and the Smew, from Scandinavia and western Russia have been sighted on Corps property in West Alton, Mo.

The Rivers Project Office is open to the public throughout the year and even offers indoor observation vantage points to view wintering species such as Bald Eagles on the nearby Mississippi River. Visitors are able to see the wonders of the riverside wonderland from the warmth of a glassed-in viewing room. The project office also offers an education library and an environmental learning center where teachers can bring nature to life for students.

This year's Wings of Spring Festival was a first ever effort of this magnitude, combining efforts of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other Federal environmental agencies; state agencies and non-governmental organizations, but it won't be the last. The festival has positioned stakeholders throughout the confluence region to partner together, and it has created a synergy around birding education and nature tourism. Many high profile sponsors were on board as well, aiding in the success of the festival's first

year. "We want to keep this energy going by making the event an annual occurrence," said Ken Buchholz, festival chairman and development director for Audubon Missouri. "We think the festival can play a key role in developing the confluence area into a premier regional and national outdoor destination that will benefit people and wildlife."

According to Buchholz, "In our first

year, we feel the Wings of Spring Birding Festival was very much a success." He reported that planning for the 2007 festival has already started. "Both vendors and attendees alike were very pleased with the variety of activities taking place." So, mark your calendars now for the Second Annual Wings of Spring Confluence Birding Festival for May 4th & 5th, 2007.



Creating fanciful birds from toilet tissue tubes and an assortment of richly-colored feathers, beads and other craft materials caught the attention of many of the younger visitors. Here, Emily, 4 (L) and Josie (5) Manar are assisted by their grandmother, Paula Manar. Yes, there's a St. Louis District connection: Paula Manar is our own Katy Manar's mother.



Retiree's Corner



At Pietro's on Watson on April 20th:

Ron and Lois Buckhorst reappeared after several months. Ron was under doctor's care and was advised to get into an exercise program. His wife said that Ron's idea of exercise is to go from the living room chair to the kitchen and then back or to the bathroom and back. Maybe if he had a young blonde to help him exercise he would be doing more. Ron asked what the blonde had to do with exercise. (How soon we forget.) (Ron looks great and is carrying a "self protection device"—a cane. He says it helps defend him from young blonds.)

Larry McCarthy had just come from the District Office, where he had made his usual blood donation. He said that the numbers are getting smaller as time goes on and there are fewer donors to this great program. He asked the retirees to consider donating if possible.

Dennis Gould said that he is finally down-sizing and is moving into a Villa in November. He said it will take him that long to go through all his possessions and determine what he will keep. Many things will have to go.

Don Wampler said that he had recently attained a golf milestone. He said he parred one hole and that was a milestone at his age. In fact, he said, for someone his age to be playing golf, is a milestone. Congratulations Don.

The Honorable John Clark, Mayor of Canton, Missouri, and First Lady, Mary Ellen Clark, said that it is very interesting working with federal agencies to

obtain services for his city. It is different being on the "asking side" than the providing side. He has great working arrangements with the Rock Island District. He said he enjoys driving the 300 miles round trip to be with the retirees. He mentioned that if you are in his city to be sure to stop and visit him.

Lew Scheuermann said that the Spring Golf Tournament was a success. So much so, that he won 4th place in the B flight. (Congratulations Lew. And you said that you were old and under the weather.)

Joe Bisher mentioned that he is very proud to mention his age. He is now a great grandfather. (Congratulations Joe. How time flies when you are having fun.) Joe said that he is so proud of this event that he forgot to prepare anything for the retirees — any stories about his past on the river.

And on May 18th...

Attendance was a little light, but they still had a great gathering.

Wally Feld introduced a new retiree, his wife Kathy. She recently retired and wanted to see what Wally enjoyed so much about the luncheons. She also said that this was a way for her to get to eat out more often and not have to cook so much.

She was also looking to see her name to appear in the ESPRIT. (Well there you are Kathy. One of your life's wishes has been satisfied. As to her eating out more often, well, that you will have to negotiate with Wally. I understand that when Kathy retired there was a tear shed both at the office and at home.)

Lew Scheuermann said that he was going to have a "procedure" done on his neck the next day at the hospital. It was an overnight stay but wasn't going to be too serious. (It is never too serious if it is on someone else. Hope everything came out all right.)

Someone mentioned that Bill Thomure was "under the weather" also with some minor surgery. (What is this, is there a discount on "minor surgeries" for the senior class?)

Joe Bisher was his usual self, coming late and then entertaining everyone with his wealth of stories about his life on the river. He talked about a VFW meeting he went to in Ste. Gen where he met up with some of his old cronies from the dredge and caught up with some old stories. He especially was vague on the details of his frequent vacations in the French Quarter in New Orleans when he had to take his vacation from the dredge in the winter.

Joe was a "clerk" for many years on a dredge and enjoyed the life as a "sailor." There were many ports of call for the dredge and of course Joe had to be the advance scout to obtain provisions and to identify the various places for entertainment. It is said that Joe always received an excellence award for his work and hearing him tell his stories is proof positive that he really did a great job.

FLASHBACK

April 1971

The Corps announced new permit requirements to help curtail discharges of pollution into navigable waters. Permits will be required for all industrial discharges into navigable waters and their tributaries and new permits will be required where existing permits were granted without adequate consideration of the quality of the effluent. Also, permits will be required for current discharges into navigable waters where no permits had previously been granted.

Recent promotions included Salvatore Milazzo who was promoted to Records Management Officer in the Records Management Branch and Ken Corbin was promoted to Assistant Chief, Engineering Division, Flood Plain Management Branch.

John Dierker and Gerry Schwalbe were notified that they passed the Professional Engineer's Exam in the State of Missouri.

Colonel LeTellier spoke to the Rend



Lake Association about the Big Muddy River Basin.

Outstanding Performance Ratings were awarded to:

Charles Neidinger CD
Robert Maxwell PO
James Maas ED-P
O. Newell Parker ED-D
Loren Christofferson ED-D
Laurel Nelson RE
Anson Eickhorst ED-P
John Muschong ED-D

New District employees included:

John Helfrich Engineer Draftsman
Barbara Bathe Clerk-Steno
Lee Lyons Electrician
Sharon Archer Clerk-Typist
Diana Balsman Clerk-Typist
Lois Wright Clerk-Typist
David Cusack Engineering Tech

May 1971

Col. LeTellier, D.E. was put on the list for promotion to Brigadier General.

Lt. Col. Pitre, D.D., spoke about flood control to members of the Jefferson County, Illinois, Engineering Society.

Dr. Hanley (Bo) Smith held a seminar at Washington University on the effects of Ecological Problems on Urban Sociology.

Length of service awards were presented to four District employees with forty years of service:

M. Dilthey OD-PS
J. Jansen OD-N
A. Tiefenbrun ED-B
W. Worseck ED-B

New employees to the District were:

Dennis Morgan Engineer Aid
Roger Brown Civil Engr
Gerald Loesch Civil Engr
Roger Hoell Struct Engr

Robert Deien Laborer
Andrew Holthaus Laborer
William Wadkins Laborer
James Lampe Laborer

Charlie Ijames was promoted from Assistant Reservoir Manager at Carlyle to Reservoir Manager at Rend Lake.

Ten retirees totaled 299 years service:

Marian Freeman ED, 31 yrs.
Max Lamm Asst. Chief ED, 32 yrs.
James Kettman. Drdg. Kennedy, 30 yrs.
Joe Thompson Shelbyville, 36 yrs.
Newt Nickel ED, 31 yrs.
Bert Williams Kaskaskia, 35 yrs.
Everett Williams ED-F, 21 yrs.
Rusty Williams ED-P, 40 yrs.
Art Zimmer Drdg. Ste. Gen, 15 yrs.
Wayne Wright . Miss River Proj, 28 yrs.

Note! The retirees meet the third Thursday of the month, at Pietro's on Watson, at about 11am.

Engineer Day, Cont. from back cover

volunteers answered the call to help in the Gulf Coast states. They continue to do a tremendous job. The team supported the Federal Emergency Management Agency by providing ice and water, temporary power and housing, installing temporary roofing and moving mountains of debris.

The team also accomplished the Herculean tasks of pumping the flood water out of New Orleans, and repairing the hurricane protection system in time for the 2006 hurricane season. Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of this achievement is that so many employees in the region suffered substantial personal losses and hardships, yet they summoned the courage to focus on the needs of others.

A strong public service ethic and willingness to ride to the sound of the guns has allowed the Corps to meet

the demands of hurricane recovery while also accomplishing our other important missions.

The pace of work to support the growth of democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq has not lessened. We have made great strides on completing thousands of projects in Iraq, and continue to help improve conditions in Afghanistan with construction of facilities and improvements to roads and bridges.

And while those efforts have garnered headlines, every day there is a great deal more being accomplished around the world. For example, we are supporting our armed forces with quality military construction and real estate services — a vitally important mission during this time of transformation.

This past year we have destroyed old landmines and ordnance in Iraq while cleaning up old ordnance here at home, continued efforts to restore the Everglades, and improved homeland security. Also, our outstanding research and

development efforts were honored when the Engineering Research and Development Center was selected as the Army's Laboratory of the Year.

I have mentioned only a very few of the many contributions made by the Corps team. I have enormous pride and confidence in you. Thank you for accomplishing so many difficult missions under demanding circumstances. Thanks to your work the past year, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers added a page to the long, proud history of service to our nation.

ESSAYONS!
CARLA A. STROCK
Lieutenant General
Commanding



Chief's Engineer Day Message

The proud heritage of the Engineer Regiment began when Col. Richard Gridley became the first Chief of Engineers on June 16, 1775. Since then, generations of Army engineers, both Soldiers and Civilians, have answered the call to duty around the world during peace and war.

Today is no different. Throughout the past year the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has made many significant contributions on behalf of our nation and the armed forces. Our workload increased dramatically as we met the demands to support hurricane recovery, while continuing our ongoing work in Iraq and Afghanistan. Additionally, great work continued along waterways, at recreation areas, in research facilities and at armed forces installations around the world.

We have been stressed and stretched in the past year, but you have responded



**Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock, USA, 51st
Chief of Engineers**

to those increased demands with great commitment and competence. One of the most demanding missions this year has been our hurricane recovery efforts, and it is immensely gratifying to see how the team responded.

In the first hours after Hurricane Katrina hit last August, Col. Richard Wagenaar and his team from New Orleans District assessed the situation on the ground. And in a very short period of time, 3,000 people deployed to the Gulf Coast states. Only one week before, they had been working on other missions, but they quickly redirected their efforts. That response clearly shows the great agility of an outstanding workforce.

Eventually, more than 8,000

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